

BROWNS vs. BRONCOS



LEROY HOARD 33

RB 5-11 230
MICHIGAN
DOB: 5-5-68
D2-'90
3rd YEAR

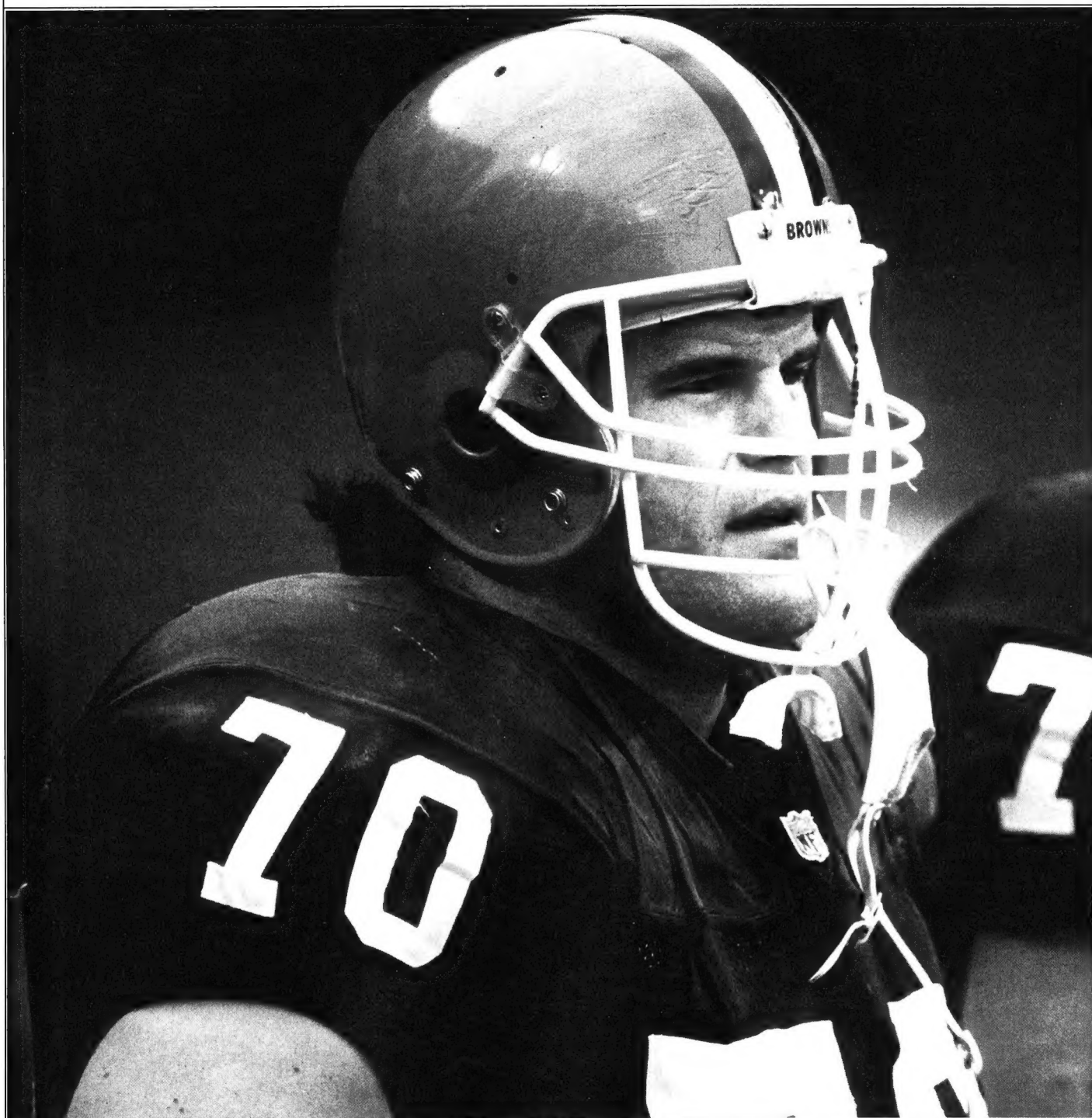
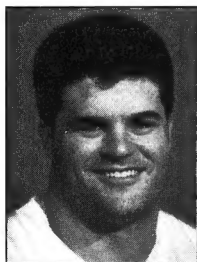


Photo by Gregory Drezdton

John Rienstra 70 — Guard



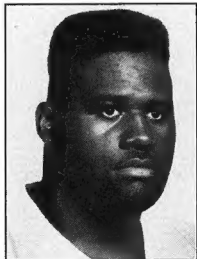
6'-4", 275 lbs., 7th Year
Temple
Academy of the New Church
Bryn Athyn (Pa.) H.S.
Born: March 22, 1963
Grand Rapids, Mich.
Free Agent (Unprotected: Steelers), 1991

PRO: Stepped into his new uniform last year and won the starting left guard position, starting all 16 games . . . Signed as a "Plan B" free agent on March 26, 1991 from the Pittsburgh Steelers . . . One of four Browns offensive linemen to start all 16 games last season . . . Reunited with offensive line coach Hal Hunter last season (Hal coached John with the Steelers from 1986-88) . . . Originally the Steelers' first round draft choice in 1986 out of Temple, the ninth player selected overall . . . One of nine Outland Trophy finalists in 1986 . . . Was four-time winner of school's "A Little Extra" Award, which was renamed Rienstra Award . . . Set national record with 738-lb. dead lift as three-time All-America powerlifter . . . Nicknamed "Rhino" . . . Last name pronounced "REEN-struh."



Photo by Gregory Drazdman

James Jones 96 — Defensive Tackle



6'-2", 294 lbs., 2nd Year
Northern Iowa
Davenport (Ia.) H. S.
Born: February 6, 1969
Davenport, Iowa
Draft 3, 1991 (57th overall)

PRO: Had a solid, steady rookie season, capturing *College and Pro Football* *Newsweekly* All-Rookie Team honors and the Wooster Browns' Backers' Unsung Hero Award . . . Started all 16 games at LDT alongside Michael Dean Perry, despite an early season battle with strep throat that resulted in a 20-pound weight loss . . . Scored eight points last season, a TD on an interception plus a safety . . . First defensive lineman taken in the 1991 draft by the Browns and the first ever selected by the Browns from Northern Iowa.

Q & A With... Eric Metcalf

By Bruce Speight, Jr.

Q: After three years in the league, what have you learned about yourself as a person, player, etc.?

A: I know when I first came in, I wasn't as mature as I thought I was as far as doing things on the football field. I mean I prepared like I was supposed to in the offseason — training and everything, but at the

same time I don't think I spent as much time watching film and paying attention to details on the other team. Whereas now, I'm doing those things and I'm pretty calmed down more about what I'm doing and taking my time about what I'm doing.

What changed your outlook?

It's hard to say. I came out as a rookie and I played a lot. Ever since then, my time had been limited until last year when I got hurt. It just made me sit back and think about it and kind of wonder why am I not playing when I know that I had the ability but at the same time I wasn't getting these chances. I just thought about what was happening and I knew that no matter what, the reason I wasn't playing wasn't because I didn't have the ability to do so, I could always do that, it was just a matter of me getting myself mentally prepared.

After being injured last season and getting a late start in training camp, was there ever a time where you doubted your abilities?

I never doubted my abilities. I knew if I couldn't do anything else, I could play football. It was just a matter of me getting those opportunities on the field that I need to show people that I had ability. If you're not playing

or you're not getting the ball in my position, you can't show anyone and then everyone thinks you're a failure but down in my mind and my heart I knew that I could play football.

How was it dealing with your injury?

It was the first injury I had since high school when I broke my thumb and they had to keep breaking it to get

It was satisfying. I mean everyone would love to score four touchdowns in one game but at the same time, that's something I have to throw away and keep in the back of my mind because one game does not make you a superstar. If you can do, not four touchdowns in every game, but some things that are big plays every game then you can be a superstar, and that's what I want to try and do.

Since you're from Seattle, did you have a lot of people at the Raiders' game?

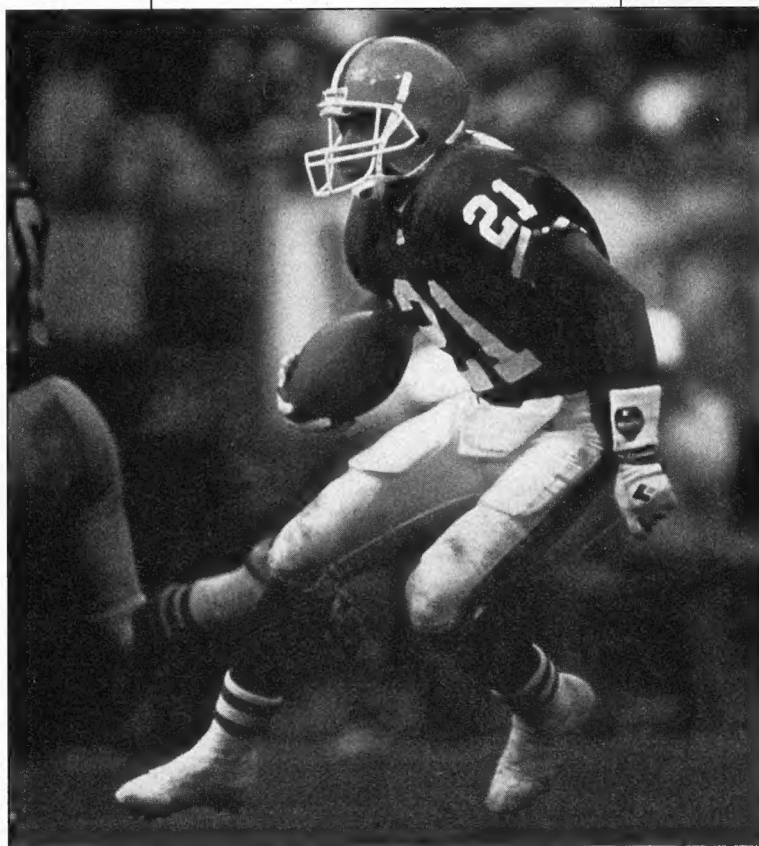
25 people I gave tickets to from Seattle and Log Angeles — that's a pretty good number, I guess.

You mentioned that no matter what you know you can play football, what kind of feeling does it give you when you're out on the football field?

I'm excited. You walk out there on the field — 70,000 people — and you know that anytime you catch the ball and run the ball, you can make those people scream or boo. It's just like having a special kind of power over them if you're a running back or wide receiver and you get the ball and you do exciting things and people just go crazy. That's the thing that gets me excited — the fact that I could get that many people excited in me.

In the offseason, how important was the influence of your mother and father?

My mother really didn't say too much because she really didn't know what was going on as far as the contracts and all that. But my dad, he's been through it and told me don't worry about anything, don't doubt your ability because you know you can play football or you wouldn't be here. All you've got to do is keep your mind right and when the time comes, play. ■



it right so I didn't get to play my sophomore year. It was tough just because I had been playing every year all year up until that point but at the same time, that year I wasn't playing that much. So it gave me a lot of time to sit back and analyze what I was doing and think about my career and get better.

With all of that, how satisfying is to you personally was your performance against the Raiders?

Against All Odds

By Frank Derry

For Brian Hansen, the mere fact he ever made it to an NFL game without a ticket is quite incredible. The fact he is now in his eighth year of punting at football's highest level is downright remarkable when you consider the following:

- He did not receive a single scholarship offer from an NCAA school following his graduation from West Sioux H.S. in Hawarden, Ia.
- He attended Sioux Falls (Iowa) Baptist College, which had a total enrollment of 800.
- He suffered cartilage damage in his left knee two weeks into training camp prior to his freshman season, forcing him to be red-shirted his first year.
- He suffered cartilage damage in the same knee his senior season which resulted in arthroscopic surgery.
- He suffered a fractured bone in his lower back and torn ligaments in an ankle early on during his five-year career with the New Orleans Saints, yet continued to kick with the pain for approximately three years.

But despite all the potential roadblocks, Hansen has proven to be one of the most dependable punters in the NFL over the past decade. Coming into this season he had punted 533 times, good for a 42.0 average. He also was a perfect one-for-one in passing, having thrown an 11-yard touchdown pass to Webster Slaughter last season.

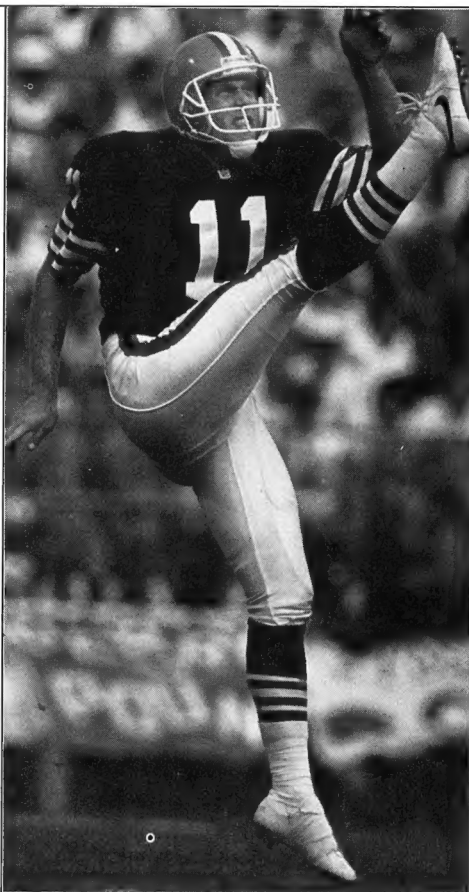
The 6-4, 220-pound Hansen, who will turn 32 on Oct. 26, is showing no signs of slowing down. Through the Browns' first four games (25 punts) he had averaged 44.4 yards with 10 ending up inside the opponent's 20-yard-line. Included was a personal-best 73-yarder against the Denver Broncos Sept. 27 at Cleveland Stadium.

Not bad when you consider he wasn't even considered a prospect coming out of high school.

"I played tight end in high school, but I wasn't big enough or fast enough to be a tight end in college," said Hansen, whose older brother Mark was establishing himself as a fine quarterback at Sioux Falls Baptist College.

"I had gone to a couple of his games and the kicking and punting was pretty pathetic," Hansen said. "So I worked on my punting prior to my senior year."

After averaging 39.0 yards, Hansen received a \$300 scholarship from Sioux Falls. "I got \$300 for football and \$200 for track," he said with a chuckle while admitting the money didn't pay a lot of bills at the private college.



■ Brian Hansen

Sioux Falls is an NAIA Division 3 school which played its games "in the middle of cornfields," Hansen said with a smile. "There were cornfields on one side and bleachers that sat about 200 people on the other side."

Unfortunately, in just his second week of practice, Hansen suffered a knee injury which resulted in his being red-shirted his freshman season. The injury was to his plant leg, which is really the worst possible scenario for a punter.

However, he worked his way back into shape and averaged 40 yards per punt his first season and 44 yards each of the next two campaigns. NFL scouts began to take notice, but they recommended he stay in school for his final year of eligibility.

But that decision appeared to be the wrong one when he suffered a knee injury just two weeks into his final year. "I felt all my aspirations of wanting to play in the

NFL had just gone out the window," he said. "I figured I would be out for the season."

But three weeks after undergoing arthroscopic surgery, Hansen was ready to start punting again. The day he was scheduled to start practicing also turned out to be the same day a scout from the NFL Combine happened to be at the school.

"I told him 'I wasn't ready to kick yet,'" Hansen recalled after turning down an invitation to work out for the scout.

Instead, Hansen went out on his own and just began punting the ball. As the scout was walking through the parking lot to his car, he kept seeing the football sailing high above the buildings.

"It turned out my leg was really fresh that day and I was getting off 50 and 60 yard punts with five-second hang time," Hansen said.

The scout noted the performance and Hansen wound up being selected in the ninth round of the 1984 draft. He spent five years with the Saints, never averaging below 40.5 yards.

But prior to the 1989 season, Hansen told the Saints he was having problems with both his knee and back. "I had played with the injuries for two years," Hansen said. "For two years I had taped my ankle up and tried to make the best of it. I was becoming inconsistent. I wasn't helping the team and I wasn't helping myself or my career."

The Saints released Hansen and he went to his own doctor and discovered he had torn ligaments in his ankle and a fracture in his back.

After sitting out the entire 1989 season, Hansen signed as a free agent with the Patriots in 1990 and carried a 41.7 average.

The Patriots didn't protect him following that season and he decided to sign with the Browns as a Plan B free agent prior to the 1991 season. "It really was a tough decision," Hansen said. "The Patriots took a chance on my health. They treated me well and I got plenty of opportunities to punt up there."

However, the Patriots had a coaching staff change after the 1990 season, thus the decision to move on to the Browns.

"In hindsight, it has turned out to be a real good decision," Hansen said. "The fans here in Cleveland are unbelievable. When I was with New Orleans, I didn't think any fans could be crazier than the Saints' fans. But no matter where you go, Browns' fans are the best I've ever seen. Coming to the Browns was the best decision I have ever made."

Nick Saban

Nick Saban is in his second year as the Browns' Defensive Coordinator.

NICK SABAN, Defensive Coordinator:

Born October 31, 1951, Fairmount, West. Va., 20th Year Coaching,
Kent State University

Coaching Background:

1973-1976 (Kent State); 1977 (Syracuse); 1978-79 (West Virginia); 1980-81 (Ohio State); 1982 (Navy); 1983-87 (Michigan State); 1988-89 (Houston Oilers); 1990 (Toledo, Head Coach); 1991-92 (Browns).

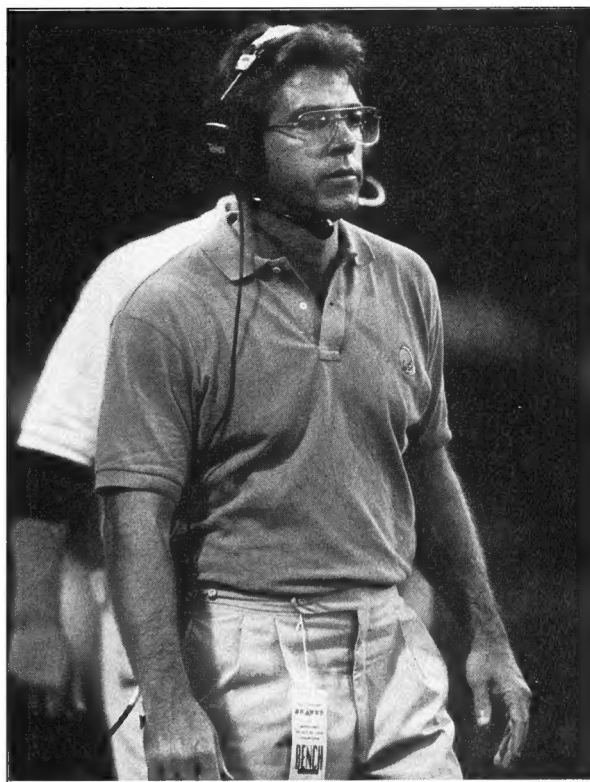


Photo by Gregory Drezdson

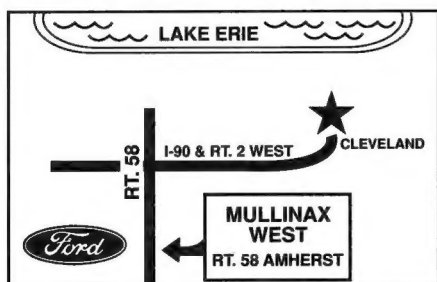
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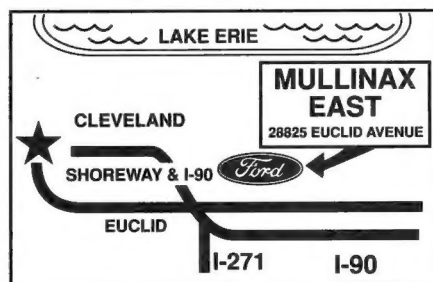
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